

Literacy Impacts Families - Programs

Family Literacy programs are organized around the core belief that children develop literacy skills in the home and community before they start school. Parents who do not read very well may not know how to help their children develop literacy skills in order to do well in school. In Family Literacy programs, adult learners improve their own skills, learn the importance of reading in the home, and pass on what they have learned to their children.

Ontario Family Literacy Interest Group, as cited in *Come Read With Me*, 2000



Romp 'n' Read was developed by READ Saskatoon in 2007 in response to the need for fun, interactive learning activities for preschoolers and their parents or caregivers. The program has been delivered both as a registered five day camp (mornings over a full week) and in two hour sessions held over 8–10 weeks.

99 families and 131 children have participated to date, with a total of 240 participants.

Between 2007 and 2010, 23% of participating families have attended Romp 'n' Read more than once. This is a strong testimony to the value of this program.



Short term evaluations were conducted by comparing changes in participant perspectives using registration and evaluation forms as well as focus group results for the 2010 summer Romp 'n' Read camp. Mid-term evaluations were collected using phone surveys to measure the impact of the program after at least one year had elapsed. Benefits of participation include:

1. Increased literacy activities

- After 1 year or more, 94% of parents listed activities in addition to book-related activities to help their children learn.

2. Increased literacy strategies to support children

- Immediately following the program, 88% of participants reported using various strategies to help their children learn as a result of Romp 'n' Read.
- After 1 year or more, 74% of parents continued to attribute Romp 'n' Read for ideas used to support them in their roles as teachers

3. Increased confidence in parenting skills

- After 2 months, 85% of participants felt their parenting skills had improved. Promoting independence and encouraging creativity were some examples shared.
- After 1 year or more, 74% of parents recalled increased patience, ideas (how to play, snacks, crafts, songs) as most valuable acquired skills.

4. Increased involvement and connection to community

- During program, parents appreciated the encouragement and support received from facilitators, other parents, and child minders.

I never used to sit with him to bake or play—just got him started and then went to do the dishes.

Parent

After 1 year or more, 52% of parents reported joining other programs or accessing community services as a result of Romp 'n' Read. 42% of parents kept in contact with other families after the program ended.

READ Saskatoon's Accountability Project aims to revise and fine-tune an accountability framework which assures READ Saskatoon is effectively and efficiently serving local and provincial needs through the appropriate use of available resources. Tools for outcome-based evaluation will be designed and piloted to measure the success, challenges and procedures of literacy projects and programs. By developing and implementing quality standards for evaluation, READ Saskatoon's Family Literacy, Adult Literacy and agency activities will be methodically measured to ensure standards of excellence remain in place and guide future directions of READ Saskatoon's Family and Adult Literacy projects and programs.